

CHOICE HOTELS AND CONCORD HOSPITALITY INTRODUCE HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Lodging Franchisor and Award-Winning Hotel Management and Development Company Further Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Belonging by Building Bridges to Meaningful Career Opportunities in Hospitality Management

ROCKVILLE, Md. and RALEIGH, N.C., Dec. 16, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Building on the company's commitments to increasing diversity across the hospitality industry, [Choice Hotels International, Inc.](#) (NYSE: CHH) and [Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company](#) are sponsoring a hospitality management accelerator program for recent students graduating from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to gain valuable experience at the upscale [Cambria Hotels](#) brand.

Two recent Morgan State graduates are the first to participate in the six-month managers-in-training (M.I.T.) rotational program, launched in September with Concord Hospitality, at the [Cambria Hotel Washington, D.C. Convention Center](#) and the [Cambria Hotel Nashville Downtown](#). Upon successful completion of the immersive training program at the hotels, these managers-in-training will have the opportunity to pursue full-time managerial positions with Concord Hospitality.

In addition to debuting the management accelerator program, Choice Hotels joined the [HBCU Partnership Challenge](#) developed by Congresswoman Alma Adams (D-NC-12) and created to strengthen public-private relationships with HBCUs to ensure the schools' future sustainability, increase career prospects for their students, and advance diversity, equity and inclusion within all sectors. Thus far, 78 companies have joined the Challenge.

"Choice Hotels is committed to advancing diversity, equity and belonging both within our organization and across the entire hospitality industry. As part of these ongoing efforts, Concord Hospitality has been an important collaborator for us in helping to create a bridge for recent HBCU graduates so they can pursue meaningful careers in hospitality," said Janis Cannon, senior vice president, upscale brands, Choice Hotels. "We look forward to working with Congresswoman Alma Adams, the International Franchise Association, hotel management companies and HBCUs to build a diverse pipeline of talent, seeding future general managers as well as future hotel owners."

"At Concord Hospitality, we believe our biggest differences are our greatest strengths and we are committed to living up to our mission to be 'A Great Place to Work for All,'" said Mark Laport, president and CEO, Concord Hospitality. "It is through initiatives like this that we build a strong associate base not only at Concord, but within the hospitality industry as a whole. We are extremely pleased to have the opportunity to work with Choice Hotels on such an important program and look forward to the bright futures of these hospitality industry employees."

Choice Hotels has recently made several enhancements as part of its decades-long commitment to diversity, including:

- Teaming with the [Executive Leadership Council](#) (ELC) to build an inclusive business leadership pipeline and increase the number of successful black executives by adding value to their development, leadership and philanthropic endeavors across the lifecycle of their careers, including funding scholarships for students enrolled in HBCUs and creating career development opportunities for Choice associates.
- Forming the [Choice Hotels Owners African American Alliance \(CHOAAA\)](#), the industry's only franchisee-focused group dedicated to Black and African American hoteliers, to allow a platform for owners to express their voices and unique experiences directly with the company's leadership.
- Creating opportunities for minority-owned businesses. As a franchisor, it is the company's vision to fuel small business through proven brands where all are welcome to pursue the American dream of entrepreneurship. To reach underrepresented groups, Choice has a dedicated Emerging Markets Program focused on establishing relationships within the African American, Hispanic, Native American and veteran communities, and [women owners](#) as well. Since the program began, the

company has awarded and financially supported over 270 franchise agreements, including 24 agreements last year, despite the pandemic.

- Implementing hiring, promotion and retention benchmarks and goals to improve the diversity of company leadership and employees at all levels of the organization.

Similarly, Concord Hospitality has instilled the following ideals, among others, at its hotel properties across the nation and throughout its entire associate footprint:

- Our biggest differences are our greatest strengths – Associates from all over North America are encouraged to share their stories to gain understanding and appreciation for everyone's differences, celebrating "I am free to be me."
- Be authentic – Concord believes that when a person feels safe enough to be themselves and be accepted, they are sure to bring their best selves to work – which translates into improved performance, innovation and results.
- Treat each person how they deserve to be treated – The company aims to ensure that the associate experience is the same across all levels, genders, ethnicities or other characteristics, regardless of how a person defines him or herself.

These ideals are paramount in a number of Concord initiatives, including through its Diversity & Inclusion Council, which was launched in 2017, as well as in more recent endeavors like the 2020 "End Racism Now" initiative, which aimed to increase the level of understanding about the Black community amongst its associates, within the hospitality industry and across the U.S. and ultimately drive change to secure equality, justice and freedom for all Americans.

"Applying for the M.I.T. Program has been one of the smartest decisions I have ever made," said Je'lynn Gould, Morgan State alumna and hospitality management accelerator program participant. "Many companies do not offer programs for recent college students and graduates, but I am grateful that Concord has! I honestly couldn't be prouder to work for such a great company! This program is truly necessary for recent graduates who have the passion for this industry, but just need a great starting point to build the experience. Completion of this program will help transform participants into managers, with the flexibility of choosing the department they like best. I can truly say that my time with Concord and Choice thus far has helped me to develop critical skills in every department of the hotel."

The Morgan State University Hospitality Management Program facilitates students' higher education by providing financial assistance through numerous scholarship opportunities. Donors can make a tax-deductible gift to the Morgan State University Foundation to support students in Morgan State's Earl G. Graves School of Business and Management Hospitality Management Program:

<https://www2.morgan.edu/ba/hospitality>

To learn more about Choice Hotels' initiatives and efforts to promote diversity, equity and belonging, view the company's [Environmental, Social and Governance Report](#).

About Choice Hotels®

Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH) is one of the largest lodging franchisors in the world. With more than 7,100 hotels, representing over 600,000 rooms, in nearly 40 countries and territories as of September 30, 2021, the Choice® family of hotel brands provides business and leisure travelers with a range of high-quality lodging options from limited service to full-service hotels in the upscale, midscale, extended-stay and economy segments. The award-winning Choice Privileges® loyalty program offers members benefits ranging from everyday rewards to exceptional experiences. For more information, visit www.choicehotels.com.

About Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company

As an award-winning hotel development and management company, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company has spent the last three decades successfully growing the company's portfolio, which includes premium-branded properties across the United States and Canada. Recognized as one of the top 10 management companies in North America, Concord Hospitality creates benefits for its partners and associates by leveraging its operations, development, sales and marketing, technology, accounting and

operational management expertise to continue to grow its portfolio of best-in-class hotels. The company believes its people are its greatest strength. With the brightest talent, the most innovative processes and a commitment to giving back to the communities where associates live and work, Concord Hospitality is committed to being a great place to work for all. Learn more at concordhotels.com.

About Morgan State University

Morgan State University, founded in 1867, is a Carnegie-classified high research (R2) institution offering nearly 140 academic programs leading to degrees from the baccalaureate to the doctorate. As Maryland's Preeminent Public Urban Research University, and the only university to have its entire campus designated as a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Morgan serves a multiethnic and multiracial student body and seeks to ensure that the doors of higher education are opened as wide as possible to as many as possible. For more information about Morgan State University, visit www.morgan.edu.

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